

Religion, perfect Freedom.

A
S E R M O N

Preached at B A R B I C A N,

M A R C H I, 1767,

On O C C A S I O N of the

D E A T H

O F

A L L E N E V A N S, Esq;

Who departed this Life *Feb.* 17, 1767,

In the 82d Year of his Age.

By DANIEL NOBLE.

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JOHN viii. 32.

—AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.

THERE is nothing in which mankind are more unanimous than in the love of Liberty. To be under any kind of restraint whatever, naturally gives us some degree of uneasiness. Every one would wish to be perfectly free even in points of the least importance. But to be controled in the more momentous concerns of life, is generally accounted an insupportable evil. And hence, in every age, there have been numerous instances of persons, who, for the defence of their liberty, have resolutely encounter'd the most formidable dangers, and chearfully submitted to every possible inconvenience and difficulty: and many, as soon as they have found themselves reduced to a state of dependance and servitude, have judg'd life itself to be no longer desirable.

Yet it must be acknowledg'd, and it ought to be greatly lamented, that there are but few who appear to have just sentiments concerning that kind of freedom, which is infinitely the most important. For there are two very different kinds of Liberty, the one of which may be denominated *external*, the other *internal*. The first of these, is only an exemption from the inconveniencies which attend a state of subjection to unreasonable and tyrannical men. But the other is a freedom from the dominion of our own passions, which whenever they become vicious and irregular, are the tyrants of the soul, first robbing it of all its native purity and dignity, and then plunging it into perpetual disorders and distractions.——And how incapable of any true happiness must they be, who are in a state of bondage to their unruly and turbulent passions, whatever other advantages they may enjoy ! An enslaved mind, a mind that is not possess'd of the power of regulating its own motions, but is incessantly hurried from one vain pursuit to another by exorbitant and insatiable appetites and desires, must be a
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continual source of pain and torture to itself.—But he whose mind is free, he who has shook off the yoke of vicious and corrupt inclinations, and has acquired a due command over the several propensities and movements of his own nature, may find out means to render himself comfortable in all circumstances whatever ; to alleviate the severest and most piercing distresses in which he can possibly be involved ; and to enjoy himself, even tho' he should be oppressed and overborn by the violence of unjust and arbitrary power, and cruelly deprived of those worldly blessings to which he may have the most equitable and sacred right.

It is this most desirable, this inward Freedom which our Saviour promises in the Text to those who know and embrace the " Truth"—And why should any one entertain the least doubt of its being in his power to attain to so happy a state ? Whatever may now be our actual condition ; let us be ever so much debased and sunk under the power of evil and perverse dispositions and habits at present ; it is most certain that this is not the natural
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and original state of our minds. Our Maker has an inflexible aversion to every kind of vice and moral depravity. He could not therefore implant criminal propensities within us,—could not create any of us with such dispositions as must necessarily lead us to an habitual course of sin and guilt. If then we are unhappily labouring under vicious inclinations, we must have contracted them ourselves. And since vicious dispositions have no natural power or authority within us, but are on the contrary only the usurpers of that authority, with which our reason was originally invested, and which they never could have acquired, if we had made a due use of our reason; it must surely be evident that we may effectually recover ourselves from their baneful influence, if we will steadily exert our own abilities, and faithfully improve those gracious assistances which God is ever ready to grant unto all who desire and endeavour to live in conformity to his holy and righteous will. —To those indeed who have long been enured to vice and sin, it may prove a work of considerable difficulty to free themselves completely from the dominion of their

their various criminal dispositions and habits. But resolution and perseverance will certainly enable them to accomplish the great undertaking. For "the Truth will make us free". And what that "Truth" is, God has sufficiently made known to us. He has given us some very clear notices of it by the light of nature. But by the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ he has pointed it out to us in so strong, so convincing, and so engaging a manner, that no one can mistake any part of it but thro' his own perverseness.

By the "Truth", of which our Text asserts, that it will "make us free", we are undoubtedly to understand, not those nice and curious speculations, with which many have so vainly amused themselves, but those great and fundamental truths which our Divine Instructor insisted upon in his discourses to his Disciples,—those plain and practical directions which he gave them for the government of their own Spirits, for the regulation of their conduct towards their fellow-creatures, and for the performance of their duty towards God,—those impor-

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tant principles of religion and morality which reason dictates, and which are more fully confirm'd and enforced by the Gospel,—and those plenary assurances, which God has vouchsafed to give us, that he will hereafter exalt unto unspeakable felicity and glory all who have faithfully endeavor'd to perform their duty, and that tho' he will most certainly inflict a just and tremendous punishment upon those, who, notwithstanding all his gracious admonitions obstinately and incorrigibly persist in the paths of vice and sin, yet he will graciously accept our most imperfect, if sincere, services, and will not fail most amply to reward us for all our “labors of love”, for every act of righteousness, and for every instance of our pious submission to his sacred will.

And what more can be necessary in order to our becoming morally and spiritually *Free*; what more can be necessary for this purpose, than a thorough and hearty belief of these truths, and such a course of behaviour in life as they will naturally lead us to?—The bare belief of them cannot indeed make us free. We must act conformably

formably to, as well as believe in them. But if we really believe in them, they will most powerfully excite us to a suitable conduct—And with respect to those who pretend to believe the Gospel, but at the same time allow themselves in the wilful and habitual violation of its precepts; is there not too much reason to apprehend that such persons cannot really believe the great, the heart-affecting doctrines of the Christian revelation? They may indeed imagine that they believe in them, because they have heard them so frequently mention'd as certainly and indisputably true. And having never taken the pains deliberately to enquire whether they are in reality true or false, they do not actually disbelieve them. But were their minds impress'd with a just and full persuasion of the important and most awakening declarations of the Gospel; how is it conceivable that such a belief should fail to lead them to that course of life, which is absolutely necessary to our escaping future misery, and to our becoming partakers of the heavenly and eternal bliss?

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But if it be possible, that we may really believe the Gospel, and yet fail to be influenced by it in the general course of our conduct and behaviour; it seems, however, evident that in the Text our Saviour includes the practice, as well as the knowledge and belief of the truth. For, in the preceding verse, we are told that he said unto "those Jews who believed on him," that "if they continued in his word," that is, according to the manifest import of this phrase in other passages of Scripture, if they continued to attend unto his doctrine, and to regulate their actions in conformity to it, they should "be his disciples indeed," and should "know the truth," by which he must certainly mean not barely those truths which he had already taught them, but that they should also receive such farther communications of religious knowledge, as were suitable to their progress in genuine goodness, which is the best preparative to enable men more and more fully to comprehend every divine truth.—And that then "the truth" thus known, and habitually conform'd as to the rule of life, should

should "make them free"—And every one who has at all considered the nature of the Gospel System, must be sensible that it really has such a salutary tendency to deliver us from every thing that is any way inconsistent with the true freedom of our minds. For, in the

First place, A firm and hearty belief of the truths contain'd in the Gospel must free us from all those dangerous errors, which precipitate us into the practice of vice and sin, and from all those prejudices of every kind, which render us either averse or indifferent to any part of our duty.

The mistakes which men fall into with respect to the means of attaining true happiness, are so various that it is impossible to enumerate them all fully and distinctly. But could they all be collected together, and each of them exactly specified and distinguished, a proper application of the great and leading truths of Christianity must immediately display the absurdity and pernicious tendency of every such error and mistake.—And nothing but the prevalence of erroneous sentiments and preju-

dices in our minds, could render us so presumptuous, as knowingly and wilfully to engage in any thing that is repugnant to the will of our Maker. Did not Sinners some way or other grossly deceive themselves, they could not proceed to such enormous acts of wickedness with so much visible confidence and imaginary security. They must doubtless apprehend that there is some kind of happiness to be found in the paths of vice, which cannot be obtained in the performance of their duty. At least, they must be supposed to flatter themselves that there is no such danger in neglecting or violating their duty, as revelation positively declares.

But when the heart comes to be impress'd with a full view of the truth of things as exhibited in the Gospel—When we are awaken'd to a just sense of the fatal consequences of vice, and perceive that it is not only destructive of the peace of our minds at present, but that it must also expose us to the most dreadful effects of the divine displeasure hereafter.—When on the other hand the various particulars of our duty are clearly and distinctly pointed out

out to us,—when the natural excellency and amiableness of every branch of holiness and virtue is evidently set before our eyes —when we are made sensible that “godliness is” indeed “great gain,” and that piety and righteousness will not only be attended with the most inestimable composure and serenity of mind and the blessing of God in this life, but will likewise infallibly conduct us to a future state of most perfect, godlike, and neverending felicity, —and when we are farther convinced that it must be a point of the utmost importance, that we should apply immediately and with the greatest ardor and earnestness to the performance of our whole duty, since the more abundantly we labour in every good word and work, the greater and more exalted will be our future degree of glory and bliss; whereas it is altogether impossible that we should find any real good by continuing any time longer in a course of sin; but, on the contrary, if we commit one sinful action more, it may sink us into dreadful and remediless perdition, as it may possibly be the very last action we shall be suffered to perform on earth, and must consequently fix and de-

determine our final condition in the future world.—When all these things, I say, are fully believ'd and attentively consider'd; they must surely be sufficient to enable us to detect the fallacy of every argument that can be suggested in favour of vice, and gloriously to resist and surmount every temptation that can be presented to us to divert us from making any vigorous efforts towards the practice of our duty, and the attainment of true and substantial satisfaction and happiness.

We are not indeed to imagine that the knowledge of the truth, as spoken of in the Text, will render us absolutely free from errors in judgment of every kind. As long as we continue in the present state, we must necessarily remain, in every respect, imperfect. They therefore who have made the greatest progress in Christian knowledge, must still be lyable to many mistakes. But these will only be such as are of little or no real importance. For every error which might prevent our advancing in the excellencies of the divine and religious life, or any way disqualify us for eternal salvation, is fully guarded against

against in the holy Scriptures. And were it possible that any one who makes the Scriptures his study, should not immediately perceive that every dangerous error is clearly confuted by the Christian revelation ; we have, however, the promise of God, that all who endeavour to do his will shall be led by his Spirit into the knowledge of all necessary truth, which must certainly imply that they shall not be suffered to fall into any errors that must naturally be productive of fatal consequences.

And as the doctrines of the Gospel have such a happy tendency to deliver us from all those prejudices and errors, which render us averse to our duty and prone to acts of vice ; they must of consequence, in the

Second place, free us from the dominion of vicious passions and criminal propensities.

Every precept and every doctrine of the Gospel is admirably calculated for this purpose. Nor is there any one perverse and evil inclination of the human mind, which

which a due attention to the truths of Christianity will not enable us to conquer. Sensuality and covetousness, pride and arrogance, malice and rancour, must appear infinitely odious and despicable to every one who has carefully studied the Gospel of the blessed Jesus. In this most excellent system of truth, we are presented with the justest views of the comparative worthlessness and vanity of all worldly attainments and enjoyments. Thus our holy religion takes the most effectual method to moderate our desires with respect to the transitory gratifications of the present life, and to wean us from those excessive attachments to the things of this world, which are in fact the original source of almost all our vicious inclinations in general. And if we are made sensible that no worldly attainments can be an adequate compensation for the fatal consequences of an habitual disregard to our duty; what farther arguments can we need to convince us of the folly and absurdity of vice of every kind, and of every wilful deviation from the laws of virtue and righteousness? Or should we be but little affected by such a representation of the per-

pernicious consequences of vice in general; do not the discourses of Christ and the writings of his Apostles, exhibit so many diversified and most striking displays of the malignity and destructive tendency of every particular vicious disposition, as may well be expected to determine us immediately to exert our utmost power and ability, that we may regain the command of ourselves, and may be completely deliver'd from the influence of every principle that is unworthy of rational beings, and repugnant to the wise and gracious designs of our Maker?

And as every part of the Gospel Institution is most excellently calculated to enable us to recover ourselves from the tyranny of irregular and disorderly passions; so the general Scheme and Plan of our Redemption has a manifest tendency to the same purpose. For what can be a more powerful dissuasive from the indulgence of any criminal dispositions, than the consideration that the Deity regards our deliverance from the dominion of corrupt and evil propensities, as a point of so great importance, that he sent into the world a Personage of such transcendant and ex-

alted dignity and glory, as his only begotten and well beloved Son Jesus Christ, to enable us to recover ourselves from a state of subjection to Sin, and to attain unto the glorious liberty of the children of God?

It is true, indeed, that this our recovery will be only of a gradual kind. The completest knowledge of the truth will not enable us all at once to free ourselves from every vicious inclination and habit. And even those who have made the greatest progress in the religious life, must expect that upon some occasions they will find it a difficulty to preserve themselves from becoming again the Servants of Sin. But after we have once experienced the satisfactions of a religious and virtuous freedom, must we not be altogether inexcusable, if we do not most firmly resolve that nothing shall ever prevail upon us knowingly to indulge ourselves in the gratification of any wrong and culpable dispositions? And if this is the habitual resolution of our minds, tho' we may have many painful struggles to undergo in the course of our christian warfare; yet in consequence of our repeated efforts, and
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of that divine assistance which Christ has taught us to expect, we must at length triumph over every difficulty, and acquire such an habitual command over all the passions and inclinations of our nature, as will enable us to possess ourselves in peace and composure, and freely and steadily to perform whatever duties either revelation or reason prescribes.

In the last place; To render the freedom of our minds quite complete, the knowledge of the truth, as it is dictated by reason and confirm'd by the Gospel, will also deliver us from all those disturbing anxieties and fears of every kind, which so often render life a heavy burthen, and sometimes totally disqualify us for prosecuting with due vigor the great purposes for which our existence was given us.

A firm belief of those most interesting truths, which are the basis of the Christian religion, must effectually deliver us from that "fear of man" which "bringeth a snare," as it too often influences us to the neglect of our duty, and betrays us into the basest compliances with what we know to be wrong and criminal. If we

have no just sense of the providence and moral government of God; our fellow-creatures are capable of injuring and annoying us in so many different ways, that the apprehension of our being exposed to the effects of their ill will, must frequently occasion us much disquietude; and in such a case, every method of securing the friendship of men, however mean and unworthy in its own intrinsic nature, must appear to be our highest wisdom. But how can any one who habitually remembers, that by a faithful perseverance in well doing he shall assuredly obtain the protection and blessing of that Sovereign Being, who is able to make all things work together to his good; how, I say, can any one who is habitually mindful of this great article of the Christian Faith ever be so afraid of the power or malice of man, as to be greatly discomposed and alarm'd in his own mind, or prevented from proceeding in that course of righteousness, which will constantly yield him inward peace, comfort, and joy in this life, and finally fix him in the full fruition of ineffable felicity in the world to come?

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He who believes, and lives in conformity to the truth, as delivered in the gospel, can have no reason to be anxiously afraid of pain, of poverty, or of any other evils relative to the present life. That doctrine of truth, which is the object of his cordial belief, most expressly assures him, that all his concerns are under the direction of an infinitely gracious, and perfectly wise providence. Why, therefore, should he be uneasy for fear of any events that can ever take place?—What is there that can justly dismay one who has an almighty friend to rely upon? Sudden and unforeseen emergencies may indeed affect him with some transient emotions of fear. But these must immediately cease as soon as ever he recollects those great truths in which he believes, and which may at all times inspire him with the most perfect confidence and security. God, he knows, will not,—cannot deceive him. And well, therefore, may he preserve the compleatest serenity amidst the most gloomy and threatening prospects of human life.

But, above all, it is worthy of our most attentive consideration, that he, whose heart

heart and conduct are duly influenced by the sacred truths of the gospel, will be able to triumph over the dread of Death and all its awful consequences, " thro' " the fear of which," many, as the Apostle says, have been " all their life-time subject to bondage." The displeasure of God, and the just punishments which he will inflict upon the hardened and incorrigible workers of iniquity, most certainly ought to excite every possible sentiment of dread and terror in the hearts of the vicious and profane. But he who habitually hearkens to the councils and commands of God and the blessed Jesus, knows that he is so far from having any thing to fear from his Maker's displeasure, that, on the contrary, he shall be for ever receiving new manifestations of his inestimable favor and friendship ; and that consequently whenever the hour of his dissolution shall arrive, it must prove to him a happy and joyful introduction to all that unspeakable blessedness, which is the appointed portion and reward of every sincere and faithful Servant of God. And having this well-grounded hope and assurance, he can heartily welcome the approaches of Death. In the language of the holy Apostle, he may, with just exultation, cry out, " O death!

“ death ! where is thy sting ? O grave !
 “ where is thy victory ? ” He finds himself ready, without reluctance, to bid adieu to all the vain and perishing objects of this fleeting and transitory life ; and with joy too great for utterance, takes his passage into an invisible world, as unto his native soil, his Father’s house, his everlasting home, where alone he can become truly and completely happy.

Thus have I endeavoured to take a brief and general view of the nature of that *Freedom*, which arises from a genuine and firm belief in the doctrines of the Gospel, and a practical conformity to its precepts.—Let me just add that this our Christian freedom will be more or less complete in exact proportion to the strength of our faith, and the steadiness of our endeavours to perform our duty.—But if any one is in any considerable degree possess’d of such a Freedom ; what is there that can be capable of rendering him unhappy ? The inflexible rectitude of his own mind will enable him in the most comfortable manner to support every affliction that can befall him, and to improve it in some way or other to good and valuable purposes.—Or what is there
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that can in any case prevent him from acting with courage and resolution, or from displaying the most noble fortitude and elevation of soul in the performance of the most difficult duties? He cannot be greatly afraid of any injuries that his fellow-creatures may do him; because he is well-assured that the great Ruler of the world will preserve him from every real evil. Nor can he be prevented from the discharge of his duty by any wrong dispositions within himself; because these he has conquered and subdued. And being thus completely fortified against all outward dangers, and freed from every inward impediment, with what a holy joy and triumph of spirit may he advance towards perfection thro' the several stages of this his state of tryal, till at length he shall arrive at the regions of unfading glory and bliss!

What has been already said, naturally leads us to the following observations.

First, How great is the intrinsic worth and importance of religion !

Religion gives us peace of mind.—Religion gives us the best and truest Freedom ;

dom ;—and every one who is not actually engaged in the religious course, is in a state of abject slavery to his passions, and must be a total stranger to all the best and noblest satisfactions of the human mind. And let us remember, that nothing but Revelation could have enabled us to attain to such measures of inward peace, serenity, and freedom, as are actually the portion of the sincere and zealous Christian. — Philosophy has pretended to produce the same effects. But Philosophy, till assisted by Revelation, could at best afford but a weak and slender foundation for such a hope and trust, as is necessary in order to establish our souls in full and perfect peace and freedom.—How strange, therefore, is the folly of those who on any account depreciate our holy religion !——But

In the second place ; Is Religion founded on the truth of things ? And is it only the knowledge of the truth and a practical conformity to it, that can render us free, and give us inward peace and comfort ?—There must then be very few cases, in which it can be a thing altogether indifferent, whether our notions and sentiments are just

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and accurate, and conformable to the truth, or the contrary.

The principal benefits of religion do indeed result from an habitual adherence to the great and weighty matters of the law; but even in points of inferior moment, the knowlege of the truth may justly be presumed to have some influence upon the rectitude of our conduct; and must consequently be capable of making some additions to the peace and freedom of our minds. Should we not then follow after truth in every point as closely as possible? And especially should we not, from a principle of conscience, first endeavour to discover, and then steadily adhere to, that particular profession of the Christian Faith, and those modes of religious worship which are most agreeable to the truth in its purest forms?

Again, in the third place, is it not evident, that though the freedom, which the gospel proposes to its votaries, wholly relates to the inward frame and state of our own spirits; yet the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus, bears a very friendly aspect to the cause of *civil liberty*?

I do not know of any one text in the whole New Testament, that can justly be urged as giving a sanction to the rights assumed by government, or on the other hand as deciding any thing in favour of the natural liberties of Subjects. The Gospel has left all these things just as it found them, confining itself wholly to the direction of our spiritual concerns. And if we consider the time of our Savior's appearance on earth, a time when despotic Tyranny was every where spreading its execrable ravages, and daily acquiring new triumphs over the expiring liberties of the human race ; it is certainly a proof of the wisdom of Christ, that he did not at all interfere in civil matters, or make such declarations in behalf of the common rights of universal mankind, as could only have tended to draw down the whole fury of the secular power upon all his followers, and might have been alledged as a plausible pretence for the most violent efforts to prevent the progress of the Gospel.—But certain it is that if Men in general conform'd to those laws of benevolence, which are the true spirit of the Gospel, none could have cause to com-

plain of the infringement of any of those privileges which they can justly claim. And in the *Mosaic Law*, we find that every thing was adjusted in such a manner as shew'd the greatest tenderness for the natural rights of the very meanest individual among the Jewish people.—And it is very observable, that, in most countries and in most ages, the prevalence of knowledge and of liberty seems to have had some real connection; and when one of them has been banish'd, the other has soon disappear'd.—Perhaps there never was any country, where truth of every kind has been so fully understood, or where the spirit of liberty has display'd itself to so much advantage, as in this nation. Yet should we once fall into a total disregard to religious truth, how soon might we expect to lose our most precious civil liberties! Or should we on the other hand by any means be deprived of our civil liberties, how very soon might spiritual darkness overspread our land!—Let us devoutly pray that these may be distant, very distant events.—And let us remember that, viewed in this light, every attempt to secure the civil liberties of any people, must be highly commendable

dable, not only on account of the intrinsic justice of the cause itself, but likewise as having some tendency to establish the prevalence of religious knowledge among mankind.

In the last place ; Is it not just cause for religious joy and thankfulness, whenever we have an opportunity of seeing the efficacy of religion display'd in the lives of any of its professors !

How great a pleasure, and how highly edifying is it, in an Age of so much dissipation as the present, to behold any of our fellow-christians, especially any whose affluence and wealth might too strongly prompt them to the fashionable vanities of life ; how edifying, I say, is it to behold any such persons earnestly pursuing the glorious paths of virtue, aspiring after the sublimest joys of immortality, and as the appointed means of attaining final bliss, steadily adhering to the commands of God and our blessed Redeemer ! And whenever we have any intercourse with persons, whose minds appear to be enlarged by just and extensive views of religious truth, elevated to a devout communion

munion with their Maker, expanded with generous sentiments of benevolence towards their fellow creatures, and happily deliver'd from those fears and terrors to which so great a part of mankind are at their coolest seasons of recollection so often subject; but especially when we see any one meeting death without dismay, and waiting with serenity for the happy hour which shall unite him inseparably to his God for ever and ever; how does every such instance demonstrate the excellence of our most holy religion! And how ought it to excite us to encreasing diligence, fervour, and zeal, in every part of our duty!

These reflections naturally occur upon the removal of a very honourable Member and Deacon of this Church, * whose name I need not mention here, and upon whose character I shall not largely expatiate.— But I should be greatly wanting to the cause of truth and goodness, if I did not remind all who knew him, of the importance of their imitating those virtues, which render'd him so great an ornament to his profession, and which enabled him

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* ALLEN EVANS, Esq;

to quit life with tranquillity, and to resign his spirit into the hands of his Maker with that humble confidence, which is the natural result of a life uniformly spent in doing the will of God.

His memory must be ever respected by every consistent lover of liberty, but especially by the whole body of Protestant Dissenters, for the noble and successful Stand which he made in a case, in which Oppression, by length of time, seemed to have nearly acquired the force of a Law.

We ought with pleasure to recollect his steadiness in that form of religious worship, which he judged to be most agreeable to the general tenor of the gospel, and most conducive to the purposes of piety and mutual edification—a steadiness which was justly noticed to his honor in the highest court of Judicature in this land.—And how much is it to be lamented, that any should, upon any account, quit that particular religious profession, in which they have first, upon choice, engaged, unless they can in sincerity assert, that they have at length discovered some better, some more consistent, and more edifying way of serving God!

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But the steadiness, which our late excellent Friend shewed, in adhering to what he thought the best and most eligible modes of religious worship, did not in any degree lessen his charitable regards to those from whom he differed. His sentiments in this respect were greatly generous, and he often expressed a just astonishment, that any Professors of Christianity should, upon account of religious differences, treat with disrespect any of those who by their conduct manifest a sincere and hearty love to the Lord Jesus.

Such enlarged sentiments of piety, and devout affection toward God, as prevailed in his breast, could not fail to produce in him a constant readiness to do all good offices to his fellow-creatures as occasion required.

But I shall not enter upon any farther particulars of his character ; only just to mention, that during his long illness his conversation was most generally turned to spiritual subjects. He shewed a very uncommon strength of memory in treasuring up any lively descriptions of the future blessed-

blessedness of the righteous; and how often did he repeat them with visible emotions of heart-felt delight and joy! His affections seem'd to be entirely placed on the things which are above, whither Jesus is ascended as our Forerunner. Of this he gave an eminent proof when he was informed of the decision of the great cause in which he had been so long engaged, a cause very interesting both to civil and religious liberty, and which he had therefore always maintained with just ardor and spirit. But when it was at length finally determined in his favour, tho' it could not but give him pleasure to reflect that he had been successful in such a cause, yet he shewed that his heart was wholly occupied by much higher objects. He was hastning towards a better world, and did not think any affairs relative merely to the present life, worthy of any great degree of his attention.

And as these were the dispositions with which he closed a life of great activity and zeal in the service of God, how justly may we trust that he is now reaping the fruits of piety and righteousness, and triumphing in that glory, which is reserved in heaven for all who fight the good fight, finish their course, and keep the faith!

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And ought not each of us to cultivate a just and lively regard to that future happy state, to the hopes of which God has called us by his Son? No words can convey any adequate idea of that god-like felicity which will be the final portion of all who seek for it by a steadfast continuance in well-doing.—If we gain an admission into the blessed world above, all our infirmities will be removed, all our wants supplied, all our desires completely satisfied: And this our happiness, will continue and increase for ever and ever.—Let us therefore lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before us, faithfully observing all the commands of God, that so when he shall call us hence, we may be well prepared to appear before him, and may be blessed in our deeds unto all eternity.



THE END.

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Page 16, last line, for *such a*, read *any*.